PURPLE HEARTS
REUNITED

For Immediate Release

At 5:30 pm on 07 August 2019, National Purple Heart Day, the non-profit foundation Purple Hearts Reunited will reunite eight families with their lost Purple Heart Medals. Themed as "Eight on the Seven" (a tie into 8-7-19), this day will honor families who represent our nation's heroes from World War II and Vietnam. The event will take place at the New York City Fire Museum 278 Spring St, New York, NY 10013. This ceremony is open to the media.

When servicemen and women are wounded or sacrifice their lives in times of War, our country awards the service member or their family with a prestigious award in the form of the Purple Heart. Certain circumstances can lead to these medals being misplaced, lost, or even stolen. Below is a short description of the eight medals being returned in August.

1. WWII, CPL Howard Louis Ellis (Air Corps) : Howard was born 27 February 1917 in Bellingham, Washington. He would go on to enlist in the U.S. Army and served with the 9th Bombardment Squadron, 7th Bombardment Group (Heavy), 5th Air Force as a radioman. On 08 February 1942, his B-17 was attacked en route to bomb a Japanese occupied airport and was killed in action. CPL Ellis' body was never recovered and he is listed on the Tablets of the Missing. The medal was found in a storage auction by Mr. Robert Goins of Tacoma, Washington. His medal will be returned to his nieces, Toni Thompson and Pamela O'Brien from Washington. Mr. Goins will be returning this medal in person. This will be the second medal that Mr. Goins has rescued and returned for Purple Hearts Reunited.

2. Vietnam, PFC Richard Garry Ross (USMC): Private First Class Robert Garry Ross was born 20 March 1948 in El Monte, Los Angeles County, California to Odus Elex and Virginia Lee *Scorginns* Ross. His father was Cherokee Indian. He enlisted into the U.S. Marine Corps and was assigned to H&S Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division as a mortarman. He was severely wounded in combat action on 02 May 1967 near Quang Nam, Vietnam. He succumbed to his wounds and passed eight days later on 10 May. He was just 19 years old. His medal was discovered by a good Samaritan who was renting a house to Richard's wife, after she passed away. His medal will be reunited with his niece, Carolyn Ross of Adelanto, CA.

3. WWII, SSG Mark E. Miller (Air Corps): SSG Mark E. Miller was born 21 October 1917 in Morristown, New Jersey to Joseph Miller. He enlisted into the U.S. Army Air Corps on 14 March 1944 and was assigned to the 6th Bomber Squadron, 29th Bomber Group, 20th Air Force and served as the left gunner of a B-29 called the "City of Phoenix". While on a bombing mission (Aircraft Factory) over Tachikawa, 10 miles northwest of Tokyo, on 08 August 1945, his aircraft received at least three direct bursts of heavy flak sending the bird spiraling out of control. Of the 11 aircrew on board, only two made it to ground. Both were captured by the Japanese. One was tortured and executed within a day. They were the last B-29 crew to be shot down in World War II. The medal was rescued from Ebay for $520.00. His Grandson,SGM (r) Mark D. Baylis, Founder and CEO of Valor will be receiving his medals.

4. WWII, S1c David Evidon (Navy): S1C David Evidon was born on 21 October 1923 in Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota to parents Alex Kelly "Kelly" and Rebecca "Becky" (Hoffman) Evidon. David enlisted in WWII with the U.S. Navy in December 1941. He had the rank of Seaman First Class, serving as torpedo man on the submarine U.S.S.

Pickerel (SS-177), which received the presidential citation for attacking Japanese supply lines in 1943. At the age of 19, David was declared Missing in Action on 03 April 1943, presumed Lost at Sea, probably sunk by a depth charge attack off of Honshu, Japan. He was declared Killed in Action on 10 August 1945. David is memorialized at Tablets of the Missing, the American Battle Monuments Commission's National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, also known as "The Punchbowl" in Honolulu, Hawaii. Being of the Jewish faith, David was also memorialized in a December 28, 1945 press clipping in the Minneapolis publication "American Jewish World." The medal was found by the Minnetonka Minnesota Police Department. Officer Dustin Stenglein will be reuniting his medal with his nephew, Daniel Wilensky of Fort Myers, FL.

5. WWII, Ensign Rubin Keltch (Navy): Ensign Rubin Keltch was born 21 February 1919 in New York, New York to Nathan and Katie Keltch. He resided at 1466 Clay Avenue, Brooklyn, New York. He enlisted for service in the U.S. Navy and served on the U.S.S. Plymouth (PG-57). On her last voyage USS Plymouth left New York to escort a convoy to Key West when on 5 August 1943 the enemy vessel U-566 slammed a torpedo into her. The enemy torpedo crashed into the port side amidships and exploded, causing spreading fires, Ensign Keltch unhesitatingly risked his life to assist several survivors to safety. Proceeding to the engine room in search of others known to be trapped and helpless, he entered the compartment and was himself trapped, thereby losing his life. The ship took on a heavy list and sank in two minutes. For actions that day, Rubin Keltch received the Navy Cross. For his heroic service and sacrifice, Rubin has a park named after him in Brooklyn, New York. Keltch Park is located on Jerome Avenue in the University Heights section of the Bronx and extends from Macomb's Road to Elliot Place. Ketch's lost Purple Heart was returned to his Niece, Mrs. Florinne Keltch Abramowitz last year at Keltch Park during a powerful ceremony. Ensign Keltch's Navy Cross was later found by the same gentleman, Jeff Kauffman of Brattleboro, VT who had found his purple heart. Today, Mrs. Florinne Keltch Abramowitz will donate her Uncle's Navy Cross and Purple Heart to the Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) of NYC for display for years to come.

6. WWII, PFC John M. Efstis (Air Corps): Private First Class (PFC) John M. Efstis was born in 1923 in West Orange, NJ to Michael and Dora Efstis, both immigrants from Turkey. After graduation from West Orange High School in 1942, he enlisted into the U.S. Army on 02 January 1943. On November 26, 1943, a loss of American military personnel of almost identical magnitude to the U.S. Arizona occurred when the British troop transport ship, the HMT Rohna, was sunk by a radio-controlled rocket-boosted bomb launched from a German bomber off the coast of North Africa. By the next day, 1,015 American troops and more than 100 British and Allied officers and crewmen had perished. John is memorialized in the North Africa American Cemetery and Memorial in Carthage, Tunis, Tunisia. The medal was brought into the Shreveport VA by a stranger who handed the Ambassador Volunteer the Purple Heart in its original case. Two Veterans from that office have made it their mission to get it home. His medal will be returned to his nephew David and his niece Joyce from California. .

7. WWII, PFC Calvin Morris (Army) This is a unique return as we will be reuniting Calvin's trunk that was found in Rheims, France by friends of Helen Patton, Mr. Daniel Le Bulot and Mr. Laurent Oliveira. Calvin had spent the night in a halfway house on Christmas Eve,1944. PFC Calvin Morris was born 11 June 1924 in Brooklyn, New York to Frank and Anna Bronerwin Morris. He enlisted for service on 24 February 1943 and was assigned to Company C, 203rd Engineer Combat Battalion. He married Shirly Morris and had two children Jerry and Eileen. Calvin Mayer joined the fire department in Mayer, Arizona after having served with the New York Fire Department. He suffered a heart attack while involved in the rescue of a gunshot victim on a hillside and passed away on 16 August 1992. He is buried in the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona, Phoenix, AZ. He is honored on the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Emmitsburg, MD. Ms. Helen Patton, Granddaughter of legend General George Patton will be presenting his children Jerry Morris of Twin Falls, ID and Eileen Kingston, of Long Island.

8. WWII, SSGT Milton G. Coslite (Army): Milton was born in 1920 in Brooklyn, New York to Mrs. Eva Ginsberg. Before

enlisting into the Armed Forces, he was employed as a commercial artist. In September of 1941, he enlisted as an infantryman and served with the 55th Armed Infantry Battalion, 11th Armored Division. SSGT Coslite was killed in action on 14 January 1945 in Belgium and is buried at Luxembourg American Cemetery, Luxembourg City, Luxembourg – Plot C, Row 2, Grave 18. Milton's great grand nephew, Christopher Kemo has been on a tireless journey to reunite his grandmother with his medal. SSGT Coslit's niece, Catherine Coslit Pullen and great grand nephew, Christopher Kemo will be receiving his replacement purple heart.

This event would not be made possible with the support of the Rotary Club of New York, American Airlines, Matrix Technology, The VFW, and the help of the New York City Fire Department.

The original Purple Heart, designated as the Badge of Military Merit, was established by George Washington – then the commander- in-chief of the Continental Army – by order from his Newburgh, New York headquarters on August 7, 1782. The Badge of Military Merit was only awarded to three Revolutionary War soldiers by Gen. George Washington himself. General Washington authorized his subordinate officers to issue Badges of Merit as appropriate. From then on, as its legend grew, so did its appearance. Although never abolished, the award of the badge was not proposed again officially until after World War I. General Douglas MacArthur, confidentially reopened work of a new design and by Executive Order of the President of the United States, the Purple Heart was revived on the 200th Anniversary of George Washington's birth, out of respect to his memory and military achievements, by War Department General Order No. 3, dated February 22, 1932. Today, the Purple Heart is a United States military decoration awarded in the name of the President to those wounded or killed while serving, on or after April 5, 1917.

An estimated 1.8 Million Purple Hearts have been awarded in our nation's history. Today, in addition to being awarded to those who fight overseas, the Purple Heart is also given to military personnel who display bravery and valor as prisoners of war and while fighting certain types of domestic terrorist.

Purple Hearts Reunited is a nonprofit foundation that returns medals of valor to veterans or their families in order to honor their sacrifice to the nation. Since its beginning, the organization has returned over 600 lost medals, traveled over 100,000 miles, visited over 42 States, and has directly affected the lives of over 1 Million people. Purple Hearts Reunited was also aired on the popular History Channel show American Pickers.

Please join us for a tremendous celebration of service, sacrifice, and family history. We hope to see you at "Eight on Seven" on National Purple Heart Day, August 7th, 2019.

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